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Media Release

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Delaware Department of Justice Sentencing Announcement

Wilmington, DE – The Delaware Department of Justice today announced sentences in the following criminal cases:

Mark Purnell, age 19 of Wilmington, was found guilty on April 25, 2008 in New Castle County Superior Court of 2nd degree Murder, 1st degree Attempted Robbery, Possession of a Deadly Weapon During the Commission of a Felony, 2nd degree Conspiracy, Possession of a Deadly Weapon by a Person Prohibited, and Possession of a Firearm During the Commission of a Felony.

On January 30, 2006, Purnell shot and killed Tamika Giles during an attempted robbery in Wilmington. Purnell was arrested by Wilmington Police on January 23, 2007.

Purnell was sentenced today in New Castle County Superior Court by Judge M. Jane Brady to 43 years in prison, followed by 6 months of Work Release, then 2 years of Intense Probation, and then 17 ½ years of Probation.

Jay T. Smith, age 44 of Wilmington, pled guilty to 2nd degree Robbery, 2nd degree Conspiracy, Receiving Stolen Property and Resisting Arrest.

On February 1, 2008, Smith robbed his victim who was walking to work. Smith fled the scene in a getaway vehicle. The victim was able to read the vehicle's tag number and provided the information, along with a description of Smith, to New Castle County police. He was arrested by Wilmington Police on February 2, 2008.

Smith was sentenced today in New Castle County Superior Court by Judge M. Jane Brady to 17 years in prison.

Stephen Eashum, age 18 of Dover, pled guilty on August 26, 2008 in Kent County Superior Court to 2nd degree Robbery and 2nd degree Conspiracy.

Eashum committed a series of convenience store robberies on April 26 and April 27, 2008. During these robberies Eashum was the getaway driver. Eashum was arrested on April 30, 2008 by Dover Police.

Eashum was sentenced on Tuesday, October 14, 2008 in Kent County Superior Court by Judge James T. Vaughn to 1 year in prison followed by 1 year of Intense Probation.

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